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# American Civic Association

Pamphlet

SERIES 11, NO. 6

DECEMBER, 1912

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## NATIONAL PARKS

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### PRESIDENT TAFT ON A NATIONAL PARKS BUREAU

Address to the American Civic Association

### NATIONAL PARKS—THE NEED OF THE FUTURE

Address by AMBASSADOR BRYCE

### THE NEED FOR A BUREAU OF NATIONAL PARKS

Addresses by HON. WALTER L. FISHER,  
Secretary of the Interior

### ARE NATIONAL PARKS WORTH WHILE?

Address by MR. J. HORACE McFARLAND,  
President American Civic Association

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DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL AND STATE PARKS  
AMERICAN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

General Headquarters, Union Trust Building, Washington, D. C.

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## The American Civic Association's Movement for a Bureau of National Parks

In pursuance of its general policy in advocacy of a larger development and use of the American National Parks, their most efficient administration, and the most effective means of exploiting them as points to be visited and revisited by Americans, and by tourists of the world at large, the American Civic Association has, for the past three years, advocated a specific project for the realization of these ends by urging the creation of a Bureau of National Parks.

At its last two Conventions—those of 1911 and 1912—evening sessions were devoted almost exclusively to the National Parks. At each of them, Hon. Walter L. Fisher, Secretary of the Department of the Interior, was the presiding officer. In this pamphlet are printed the addresses, by distinguished speakers, given at those two meetings. When the American people make their demand insistent enough, it may be expected that Congress will enact the legislation necessary to make possible the large and dignified administration and development of the National Parks that is recommended in these several addresses.

creation of a Bureau of National Parks, and this Association was one of the chief agencies that interested itself in pushing that bill. We had the bill considered in committee, and I think the general result was quite favorable, but our lawmakers—to indulge in a public confidence—were so engaged in preparing for the presidential election that they made little progress for us, and today we confront precisely the same situation; and though I am here to report progress, there is not very much progress to report. But I ask this Association to continue to use all the influence in its power to see that some effective means is provided to improve these conditions, and to apply sound principles of administration to our National Parks System.

I cannot claim to be intimately versed in the diplomatic history of our country, but I can safely say that I think the highest compliment that Great Britain has ever paid us in diplomatic matters was when she appointed as Ambassador to the United States the author of the "American Commonwealth."

I have heard his expected departure from this country discussed by many men, and I have yet to hear the first one speak of it otherwise than with regret. And yet, I am going to admit a little secret feeling that perhaps it is not altogether without its compensations. The balance is still in favor of the regret but I cannot forget that a good many years ago when Mr. Bryce came to the city of Chicago to be the chief guest of honor at a public dinner it was my privilege and honor to sit next to him. The subject of discussion on which he was expected to speak was "municipal government," and as the evening wore along and we discussed the long menu, we talked about municipal government ourselves, and he did most of the talking in the most interesting fashion. It was very illuminating, and I was impressed when he said, "I wish I could talk to these people in the way I feel free to talk to you, but I am a diplomat, and there are some limitations." Now, if his release from the restraints of diplomacy is going to give us the same full, free, frank discussion that I had that evening, it will not be wholly without its compensations. I hope that this will be the result, and that his interest in us and our institutions, or if not in us alone then in those institutions that interest not only us but the whole Anglo-Saxon world, will continue, and that his keen observations and wise reflections will find their way onto paper for our

profit and our pleasure. I have the great honor to present to you His Excellency the Ambassador from Great Britain to the United States.

**ADDRESS OF  
RT. HON. JAMES BRYCE**

British Ambassador to the United States

**NATIONAL PARKS—THE NEED OF THE  
FUTURE**

I have lived long enough in the United States, and have known the United States long enough, having come here for the first time forty-two years ago, to feel just as much interested in all those questions that relate to your welfare, in city and in country, as if I were one of your citizens, and I hope you will allow me to speak to you with that freedom which you would allow to one of your citizens. I do not think I need to feel those limitations when discussing a subject of this kind, so far removed from politics or any other controversial fields.

There is one thing better even than the City Beautiful, and that is the Country Beautiful. I have had a great deal of experience in England in dealing with these questions; for some years I was chairman, and afterwards a member, of a society for preserving commons and open spaces and public rights of way, and member of another society for securing to the public places of national and historic interest, and in the course of such membership I have been led often to think of what is our duty to the future, and of the benefits which the preservation of places of natural beauty may confer on the community. That is a problem which presents itself, not only in Great Britain, but all over Europe, and what Europe is now is that toward which you in America are tending. Europe is a populous, overcrowded continent; you will some day be a populous and ultimately perhaps even a crowded continent, and it is well to take thought at once, before the overcrowding comes on, as to how you will deal with the difficulties which we have had to deal with in Europe, so that you may learn as much as possible from our experience, and not find too late that the beauty



and solitude of nature have been snatched from you by private individuals.

I need not descant upon that which the love of nature is and ought to be to each and all of us. The love of nature is the very simplest and best of those pleasures the power of enjoying which has been implanted in us. It is the most easily accessible of pleasures, one which can never be perverted, and one of which (as the old darky said about the watermelon) you cannot have too much. It is a pleasure which lasts from youth to age; we cannot enjoy it in the form of strenuous exercise with the same fullness in age, because our physical powers are not the same, but we have perhaps a more perfect enjoyment in some other ways, because we have the associations and memories of those who have in bygone days visited beautiful scenes with us, and also the associations with which poetry clothes lovely nature. Therefore there is nothing which in the interest of pure enjoyment we ought more to desire and study to diffuse than the beauties of nature. Fortunately, the love of nature is increasing among us. It is one of the tests of civilization that people should enjoy this simple pleasure instead of those more violent and exciting pleasures which may become the source, in extreme forms, of evil. The love of nature, I say, is happily increasing among us, and it therefore becomes all the more important to find means for safeguarding nature. The population is increasing, too, and the number of people who desire to enjoy nature, therefore, is growing larger both absolutely and in proportion. But, unfortunately, the opportunities for enjoying it, except as regards easier locomotion, are not increasing. The world is circumscribed. The surface of this little earth of ours is limited, and we cannot add to it. When a man finds his house is too small, he builds more rooms on to it, but we cannot add to our world; we did not make it, it was made for us, and we cannot increase its dimensions. All we can do is turn it to the best possible account. Now, let us remember that the quantity of natural beauty in the world, the number of spots calculated to give enjoyment in the highest form, are limited, and are being constantly encroached upon. There are four forms that this encroachment takes. There is the desire of private persons to appropriate beautiful scenery to themselves, by enclosing it in private grounds around their houses and debarring the public from access to it. We in England and Scotland have lost some of the most beautiful scenery we possess

because it has been taken into private estates. A great deal of the finest scenery in Scotland is now practically unapproachable by the pedestrian or the artist or the naturalist because people have appropriated it to their private purposes and keep the public out. This is especially the case where the motive for exclusion is what is called sport. Sport is understood to mean killing God's creatures, and for the sake of killing God's creatures, such as deer and birds, very large areas in Britain, and some also in other parts of Europe, are shut up.

Then the enjoyment of natural beauty is largely encroached upon by the operations of the lumbermen. That is something we do not have to fear in Britain, because timber is not there in sufficient quantity to be an article of economic value to us, but it is a very serious question here. You have prodigious and magnificent forests; there are no others comparable for extent and splendor with those you possess. These forests, especially those on the Cascade range and the Sierra Nevada, are being allowed to be cut down ruthlessly by the lumbermen. I do not blame them; timber is wanted and they want to drive their trade, but the process goes on too fast and much of the charm of nature is lost while the interests of the future are forgotten. The same thing is happening in the Appalachian ranges in New England and the Alleghanies southward from Pennsylvania, a superbly beautiful country, where the forests made to be the delight of those who wish to ramble among them and enjoy the primitive charm of hills and woodland glades, have been despoiled. Sometimes the trees have been cut down and the land left bare. Sometimes an inextricable tangle of small boughs and twigs remains, so that when a dry year comes a fire rages among them and the land is so scorched that for many long years no great trees will rise to replace those that were destroyed.

And, lastly, there is the question of water power, which has in recent years, since the scientific discoveries enabled it to be applied in the form of electricity, become an asset of great commercial value. You fortunately have a great supply of splendid water power. I am far from saying that a great deal of it, perhaps most of it, may not be very properly used for industrial purposes, but I do say that it has been used in some places to the detriment, and even to the ruin, of scenery. It has been used in Niagara, for instance, to such an extent as to change completely the character of what was

once the most beautiful waterfall landscape in the whole world. Those of you who did not see it, as I did, forty-two years ago, and are not in a position to contrast it now with what it was then, cannot know what a wretched shadow of its former self it has become—not so much by the diminution of the flow of the river as by the hideous erections which line the shores. It is not too late to repair what has been done, and I hope the day will come when the pristine flow of its waters will be restored, and when the devastating agencies will have been removed. That we will leave for a future which has begun to appreciate scenery more highly than men did thirty years ago, when the ruin of which I speak was beginning to be wrought.

Taking all these causes together, you can see how many encroachments there are upon the unique beauty of your country; and I beg you to consider that, although your country is vast and has scope of natural beauty far greater than we can boast in little countries like England or Scotland, even your scenery is not inexhaustible, and, with your great population and the growing desire to enjoy the beauties of nature, you have not any more than you need. Fortunately, you have made a good beginning in the work of conservation. You have led the world in the creation of National Parks. I have seen three or four of these. I have been in the Yosemite twice, in the Yellowstone twice, and in the splendid forest region which you have around that mountain which the people of Seattle now insist on calling Mount Rainier—no doubt the name given by Vancouver—but which used, when I first explored its forests, to be called by the more sonorous Indian name, Tacoma; and also in that superb reserve on the north side of the great cañon of the Colorado River, as well as in others of minor extent in other parts of the country. The creation of such National Parks is good, and it has had the admirable effect of setting other countries to emulate your example. Australia and New Zealand have followed that example. New Zealand, in the district of its hot springs and geysers, has made a public scenic area something similar to your Yellowstone, though not on so extensive a scale; the people of New South Wales have set off three beautiful National Parks within thirty or forty miles of the capital city of Sydney, taking regions of exquisite beauty and keeping them for a source of delight to the growing population of that city. Therefore your example is bearing great fruit. I only wish it had come sooner to

us in England and Scotland before we had lost so much control of our own natural beauties.

Let me add that it is not only a question of making more parks, but also of keeping the parks in the best condition. I heard the other day that a question has been raised as to whether automobiles should be admitted in the Yosemite. May I be permitted to say a word on that subject? If Adam had known what harm the serpent was going to work, he would have tried to prevent him from finding lodgment in Eden; and if you were to realize what the result of the automobile will be in that wonderful, that incomparable valley, you will keep it out. The one drawback to enjoyment of the Yosemite Valley in the summer and autumn is the dust; the granite rock along the roads easily becomes fine sand; even the feet of the horses and the wheels of the vehicles raise a very great deal of it, which interferes with enjoyment as one drives or walks; but the conditions would be grievously worse with the swift automobile. And, further, the automobile would destroy what may be called the sentimental charm of the landscape. It is not merely that the dust would be there, but the whole feeling of the spontaneity and freshness of primitive nature would be marred by this modern invention, with its din and whir and odious smell. Remember, moreover, that one cannot really enjoy fine scenery when one is traveling at a rate of fifteen or twenty to thirty miles an hour. If you want to enjoy the beauty of such landscapes as the Yosemite presents, you want to see them slowly. You see scenery best of all in walking, when you can stop at any moment and enjoy any special point of view, and you can see it pretty well in riding or driving because in moving at a pace of four or five or six miles an hour you are not going too fast to take in the delicate details of the landscape. But traveling faster than that—and my experience is that chauffeurs so delight in speed that it is hard to get them to slacken even when you bid them—you cannot enjoy the beauty. It was often my duty in the British Parliament to oppose bills conferring powers to build railways through some of the beautiful lake and valley scenery we have in Britain. The advocates of the bills urged that passengers could enjoy the landscape from the windows of the car. But we pointed out that you cannot really enjoy a romantic landscape from a railway window where the beauties are delicate and the scale small. It is different where scenery is on a vast scale, so that the railway is insignificant in comparison, and the

objects, rocks or mountains, are huge. One may get the big views from a train, though they are better seen in walking or driving, but you cannot enjoy the small beauties. The focus is always changing in your eye, and it is impossible to have that kind of enjoyment which a pedestrian, or a painter, or any lover of nature has if you are hurrying past at a swift automobile pace. At present the steam-cars stop some twelve miles away from the entrance of the Yosemite Park, and the drive up to it gives you far more pleasure than a journey by rail or automobile possibly could. There are plenty of roads for the lovers of speed and noise without intruding on these few places where the wood nymphs and the water nymphs ought to be allowed to have the landscape to themselves.

Let me pay a personal tribute to the taste and judgment with which, as it seemed to me three years ago, the hotels in the Yosemite were being managed. There were no offensive signs, no advertisements of medicines, no other external disfigurements to excite horror, and the inns were all of moderate size and not more than two stories high. I earnestly hope that the administration will always be continued on these lines, with this same regard for landscape beauty.

Now, a word about additional parks. Although you have done splendidly in creating these I have mentioned and some others, there are still other places where National Parks are wanted. There is a splendid region in the Alleghanies, a region of beautiful forests where the tulip trees grow to one hundred and fifty, two hundred feet, or more, a mountain land on the borders of North Carolina and East Tennessee, where there are romantic river valleys and hills clothed with luxuriant woods, primitive forests standing as they stood before the white man drove the Indians away, filled with flowers and traversed by sparkling streams, containing everything to delight the heart of the lover of nature. It would be a fine thing to have a tract of three or four hundred thousand acres set apart here for the pleasure of the people of the South and Middle Atlantic States, for whom it is a far cry to the Rockies. Then you might have some additional parks in Colorado also. As regards the Northeast Atlantic States, what seems to be most wanted is to preserve the forests of the White and Green Mountains. Perhaps it is not necessary to create in that country a National Park in the same sense as that which might be thought requisite in the Alleghanies, because the mountains are so high and rocky,

and so little ground is suitable for cultivation in the valleys that it is not likely they will be taken up, and probably hardly necessary that the Government should step in to save them. But I believe that in some parts of the White Mountains, for instance, it would be an excellent thing to create large forest reserves, where the trees should be under protection of the National or State Government, cut by them as required, and the forests replanted as they are cut. In this way you would keep a place where the beauty of the forests would remain for all generations, and where the forests would be so cared for that the present danger of forest fires would be averted.

There is one question that comes very near to you in Baltimore, and also in Washington, on which I would like to speak a word. You know there is a great deal of charming forest country between Baltimore and Washington. A good deal of it is forest of the second growth, some bits of it are of the first growth; but even that of the second contains a great number of beautiful, fine-grown trees. The land is of no considerable value at present, and I believe it could be purchased at a very low price. I have heard it suggested that thirty-six dollars an acre would be an average price for the land, of which there is a great quantity remaining. Having frequently taken walking excursions from Washington into the country from ten to fifteen or twenty miles around, I have been struck with the beauty and profusion of the wild flowers in that district. The flora of that region being a blend of the flora of the North Atlantic States with some of the plants and flowers which belong to the South Atlantic, is of great interest to the scientific botanist. Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Washington are all swiftly growing cities. What could be done better for the inhabitants of these three cities than to secure for their enjoyment a large part of this forest land and set it apart, forever free from private purposes or use of agriculture, and keep it as a forest reserve to be managed scientifically, so that it should pay for the expense of working it by the timber which could be cut and sold on well-planned scientific lines, and to afford a place where people could go and wander about at their own sweet will, just as the old settlers did when they first came here? Here the automobile would do no harm on the main roads, because there would be plenty of byways and forest footpaths. If the automobilist wants to be whirled along the roads, let him have his way, but keep wide sylvan spaces where those

who seek quiet and the sense of communing with nature can go out in the early morning from the city and spend a whole day enjoying one spot after another where nature has provided her simple joys, mingled shade and sunlight, the rustling of the leaves, and the songs of birds. Such things in life the man of the cities can have, and when nature has provided it in such bountiful measure would it not be a shame to lose the benefits she offers?

I am sensible that I may be perhaps accused of treating this subject in a somewhat sentimental way. Well, I confess, I am not addressing my arguments to those who think that man lives by bread alone, or who think there are no values except those measured by dollars and cents. It is because I believe the members of this Association are not of that mind that I venture to address these considerations to you.

And let me try to give some logical quality to my statements by submitting some few propositions in order.

The world seems likely to last a long, long time, and we ought to make provision for the future.

The population of the world goes on constantly increasing and nowhere increasing so fast as in North America.

A taste for natural beauty is increasing, and, as we hope, will go on increasing.

The places of scenic beauty do not increase, but, on the contrary, are in danger of being reduced in number and diminished in quantity, and the danger is always increasing with the accumulation of wealth, owing to the desire of private persons to appropriate these places. There is no better service we can render to the masses of the people than to set about and preserve for them wide spaces of fine scenery for their delight.

From these propositions I draw the conclusion that it is necessary to save what we have got, and to extend the policy which you have wisely adopted, by acquiring and preserving still further areas for the perpetual enjoyment of the people.

Let us think of the future. We are trustees of the future. We are not here for ourselves alone. All these gifts were not given to us to be used by one generation, or with the thought of one generation only before our minds. We are the heirs of those who have gone before, and charged with the duty we owe to those who come after, and there is no duty which seems clearer than that of handing on to them undiminished facilities for the enjoyment of some of the best gifts that the Creator has bestowed upon his children.

## ADDITIONAL REMARKS BY SECRETARY FISHER

Subsequent to Mr. Bryce, Secretary Fisher spoke further, as follows:

I suppose my friends, the automobilists, would regard me as lacking in judicial quality if I did not state that most of those who apply for admission of automobiles to the Yosemite, and perhaps to the parks generally, are prepared to concede that they should be used merely for access to the hotels or stopping-places, and not for conveyance in and about the park. That of course is not universally true, because some of them do insist that they should be allowed to run their automobiles wherever they wish to go. But I wish that His Excellency had the opportunity—perhaps he may find it—to peruse the voluminous correspondence from the very insistent automobilists of the United States, with most enthusiastic statistics as to their numbers and growth and influence, and the very great detriment that the difficulty of access to the parks under the present system causes. The question is one which is not without its difficulties.

It will also perhaps interest the Ambassador and you to learn that some practical steps have been already taken, particularly with regard to the creation of parks at some of the points to which he refers. The Chief Geographer of the Geological Survey spent a large part of his summer in Colorado, examining the region known as Estes Park, which I have no doubt the Ambassador knows well and appreciates. The question there, as elsewhere, presents serious difficulty, largely due to the fact that much of the territory which should be included in the park if it is to be made a National Park, has already passed into private hands, and the nation is confronted with the alternative of either creating the park with these private holdings inside, or spending very large sums in their acquisition.

In the East the policy to which he refers has already been put into some practice. One of the duties of the Secretary of the Interior is to sit as a member of the National Forest Reservation Commission, which is charged with the duty of spending the money which Congress has appropriated for the purchase of lands that are regarded as appropriate to be reforested and controlled for the improvement or protection of navigable streams. You know that question has



been subject to earnest dispute among scientific men. The engineers have differed radically as to the actual effect of forest-cover upon stream-flow, and there has been much said on both sides, so that the Geological Survey has until recently felt that the scientific basis for the affirmative side was not so convincing as it should be. They have now conducted an elaborate series of observations, and declare themselves prepared to meet all comers and to demonstrate that forest-cover does have beneficial effect upon stream-flow. So we have practically completed the purchase of considerable areas, in the White Mountains, and in the lower Alleghany Range, running from the Smokies and the region to which Mr. Bryce has referred, up to New Hampshire. These areas will simply be held under the Forest Service and will not be National Parks in the ordinary sense. So we are making a little progress.

There is one phase of the National Park System work to which I briefly referred in my opening remarks, and that is the attempt to bring the parks before the public and to let the public understand what there is in them and why it will be to their interest and pleasure to see them. To this end there has been maintained a very informal publicity bureau, by Mr. Schmeckebier, who is in charge of publications in the Interior Department, and who will now show you some of his pictures and tell you something about a few of the National Parks.

# ARE NATIONAL PARKS WORTH WHILE?

The one evening session of the Seventh Annual Convention of the American Civic Association, held at Washington, D. C., December 13, 14 and 15, 1911, was devoted wholly to the national parks of the United States, with especial reference to the necessity of creating by Congress a Federal Bureau of Parks, within the Department of the Interior, to make possible their more adequate administration.

Hon. Walter L. Fisher, Secretary of the Interior, presided, and introduced the several distinguished speakers of the evening, all of whom were staunch advocates of a more comprehensive development of the great National Parks. The most distinguished speaker was the President of the United States, who had in his recent annual message to Congress (and later in a special message) strongly recommended the creation of a Bureau of National Parks.

## PRESIDENT TAFT'S ADDRESS

*Ladies and Gentlemen:*

It costs a good deal of money to run a government, and the first ambition of any one responsible for a government is economy—at least it ought to be. Therefore, the proposition to add a bureau or a department sends gooseflesh all over the body of anyone who has any sort of responsibility in respect to the finances of the government, for it means another nucleus for the increase of governmental expenses. Yet a modern government, in order to be what it ought to be, must spend money. Utility involves expense.

Now, we have in the United States a great many natural wonders, and in that lazy way we have in our Government of first taking up one thing and then another, we have set aside a number of National Parks, of forest reservations, covering what ought to be National Parks, and what are called "national monuments." We have said to ourselves, "Those cannot get away. We have surrounded them by a law which makes them necessarily Government property forever, and

we will wait in our own good time to make them useful as parks to the people of the country. Since the Interior Department is the 'lumber room' of the Government, into which we put everything that we don't know how to classify, and don't know what to do with, we will just put them under the Secretary of the Interior." That is the condition of the National Parks today.

Those of you who have first been in the Yellowstone Park and admired its beauties, and thought of the ability of the army engineers to construct such roads as there are there, and then have gone on to the Yosemite and have seen its beauties, and found the roads not quite so good, and then have gone to the Grand Canyon, and found a place where you could bury the Yellowstone Canyon and the Yosemite, and never know that they were there, and found no roads at all, except a railroad that was built at a great expense, and probably at great loss, to the side of the Canyon, and only a trail called the "Bright Angel Trail," down into the Canyon—down which they would not let me go because they were afraid the mules could not carry me—you will understand that something needs to be done in respect to those parks if we all are to enjoy them.

I am in favor of equality of opportunity, and I resent an exclusion from the enjoyment of the wonders of the world that it only needs a little money to remove!

Now the course that was taken in respect to the Yellowstone Park ought to be taken in respect to all of our parks. If we are going to have National Parks, we ought to make them available to the people, and we ought to build the roads, expensive as they may be, in order that those parks may become what they are intended to be when Congress creates them. And we cannot do that, we cannot carry them on effectively, unless we have a bureau which is itself distinctly charged with the responsibility for their management and for their building up.

When the Secretary of the Interior, therefore, asked me to come here, and told me the subject of the meeting tonight, I was glad to come. It is going to add to the expense of the Interior Department, and it is going to swell those estimates, but it is essential that we should use what the Lord has given us in this way, and make it available for all the people. We have the money. It is not going to take enough to exhaust the Treasury. It is a proper expense, a necessary expense. Let us have the bureau.

Secretary Fisher, in following the President, explained in detail "The Need for a Bureau of National Parks," pointing out the limitations of the existing provisions for their administration and emphasizing the larger and more dignified administration that would be possible with a regularly constituted bureau.

## ADDRESS OF HON. WALTER L. FISHER

Secretary of the Interior

At Washington, December 13, 1911

During the past summer, or early fall—I have forgotten for the moment the exact date—there was held at the Yellowstone Park the first conference that had ever been held of the people who were interested in a practical way in the administration of the National Parks and in the various interests that lead up to and are connected with them, such as the railroads and the concessionaires for the hotel privileges, transportation privileges, photographic concessions, and matters of that sort within the parks. I have not seen the tabulation of the roster of that conference, but my recollection of it is that there were in attendance something in excess of one hundred. This conference was the result of an effort which had gone on for some considerable time on the part of the chief clerk of the Department of the Interior, Mr. Ucker, and Mr. Carr, who is the next in command in that line of administration, and the other people connected with the administration of the parks in the office of the Secretary. They were joined in this, however, and had been in the preliminary arrangements and discussions, as I understand it, by the representatives of this organization, the American Civic Association, and others who were interested in the general subject of the improvement of our National Parks. The conference that was held was a very practical one. There were a great number of developments considered by those who had been asked to prepare suggestions upon particular phases of park management and control and other matters connected with the National Parks, and they were followed by general discussions from the floor, and, of course, much discussion and much talk quietly during the various recesses and in the evening.

The American Civic Association, very naturally and properly, was represented at that meeting by its long-time president, who is so well known to you and to the country at large for his work in this direction. The discussions that went on, of course, related mainly to the question of what we could do to improve our National Parks to make them more accessible to the public, and more attractive to the public. I do not know whether I shall in any way intrude upon the field which is to be covered by Mr. McFarland in his address, or by Senator Smoot, but I think it is proper I should call to your attention, for fear that they may not speak of, or be able to include in their remarks, some of the things that we often pass by, but which may be interesting and instructive to you, and I think are to be considered.

In the first place, the National Parks, like Topsy, have "just growed;" at least that is the impression which has been produced upon my mind from such investigation and discussion as I have given to them. There is no consistent theory of legislation with regard to the National Parks. While some of them follow the general lines of previous statutes, there are wide variations in the statutory authority under which the parks are carried on today. The whole park work of some states is wholly different from that of others, and the situation in detail is almost radically divergent. For instance, I find some such question as this: Whether the revenues derived from a particular National Park shall be available for the use of that park, its improvement and development. We have no consistent action. Two of our important parks are without statutory authority to that effect, so that such revenue as is derived from the park itself in any way has to go back into the general fund of the Nation, to be used in such a way as that derived from any other general source is used, and appropriated directly and specifically for that purpose. In other parks a very large per cent of the money available is directly available without appropriation. The same thing is true with regard to appropriations which Congress gives to the parks. The importance and the political pressure which a particular park possesses bring to it appropriations larger than those which may be given to another. The result is that we have no consistent theory of park administration.

There are many questions which any one could see at a glance are similar in all these parks. Take, for instance, the question of road-making. We have practically the same prob-

lems in all of the parks with regard to road-making; at least in a very considerable number of them. For instance, there may be three or four parks where these problems are so similar that the general specifications, the general principles that should be applied, are identical, but they may differ from another class of these parks.

Take many of the other questions that are raised in the parks. The whole question of the protection and disposition of the trees, the concessions, how the hotel concessions shall be managed, what requirements shall be made of the hotel proprietors, what regulations shall be made with regard to the casual ordinary visitor for his protection and so that he may receive the proper sort of service. These are very similar in all these parks, or, at all events, it is quite apparent that an examination into any given question in one of the parks would throw a great deal of light upon the same problem when it arises in others of the parks.

I mention these things, simple as they may seem, to call your attention to the singular fact that, although there has been a great deal of talk of improved efficiency in our Government affairs, we have absolutely no machinery and no legal authority to use any machinery for the coördination of these parks so we may state this problem as a whole. The only thing we can possibly do in the way of coördination in the Interior Department is to see that questions that come to us for determination are referred to the same individuals in the Department. We can see that the chief clerk, or his assistant, shall primarily pass upon these matters; we may say that the assistant secretary—as distinguished from the first assistant, there being two—shall be the person to whom appeals shall go, the person to whom the chief clerk shall go for final determination of questions of importance; and we do. When we have done that we are through. We may use our Division of Mails and Files. We may use our Division of Publications and get a certain amount of effective work there; and we have Mr. Schmeckebier of that Division, who has accomplished some quite remarkable results, in my judgment, in the publicity line simply in getting out some material to those who are eager to have it. We have found that the American public is greedy for real news about the national parks; that it is genuinely interested in the National Parks and ready to get anything that is not simply perfunctory news upon this subject. But when we have done these things the Department of the Interior is through. That

is all that it can do toward coördination. It would seem that it requires practically no argument to convince that the one thing we need at once for the efficiency of administration and economy in expenditure is to get these parks together under some division or bureau where they can receive the benefit of a central staff, where we can take the men who are now studying road-making, or the management of roads, or the sprinkling problem—which is, after all, to the traveling public probably the most important question connected with the administration of the parks, because the hotels will do a certain amount of looking after their own interests along the lines of intelligent and enlightened selfishness. And the revenue is there. But if the roads are to be sprinkled and taken care of, that must be done purely as a matter of expenditure, and unless it is looked after by the administrative force it will not be looked after at all.

Now it is perfectly apparent what we ought to have. We ought to have some sort of a central organization, something in the nature of a bureau, with a head and subordinates, so we can get proper expert talent and men who will devote their time to these matters, not merely with regard to one park but all the parks where the questions arise. It is perfectly apparent that if we were studying any one of these questions with regard to any one of these parks, and were confined to that and the appropriation for that park, we could not get as good a man to study the problems in the case of the others. And, in the second place, after we have done it once, unless we can utilize his advice and experience in some place else we won't get it at all. Then, another thing. We get rid of a good many of these isolated and separate and distinct appropriations. We would not have several appropriations made distinctly for the Yellowstone Park and made for the Yosemite Park and so on down the line, and each appropriation confined to that particular park or some particular function or interest in that park, but we would begin to learn that many of these problems are alike, that it is not enough to treat one park in one way and another in another way. We would have our Bureau bring forward the things in our parks which now do not receive particular attention, very largely through ignorance of the subject because the experience of the particular man who has that park in charge has not been so great as has been that of some other man.

The result of all these reflections was that the conference

to which I have referred was, so far as we were able to ascertain, unanimous upon the proposition that there should be established as promptly as possible a Bureau of National Parks, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, so that that Bureau might coördinate these parks and their administration and vastly improve their condition and their advantage to the public. In this conference, this was not merely the expression of foresters, of those interested in the parks from the theoretical point of view, but the conviction of men who attended there representing the large railroad systems which lead up to those parks and which are directly interested in them. And it was a very significant thing to me, as I think it will be to you, to find that the Northern Pacific Railroad Company, whose road leads to one of our principal parks, was, and is, much in favor, through its representatives, of having a National Park Bureau established, embracing other parks as well, purely from a scenic point of view. In other words, each particular railroad, which led to a particular park, was not interested solely in working for that park, but these men have reached that degree of enlightenment in their selfishness—in their self-interest—that they have come to the conclusion that it was for their own best interest to have a National Park Bureau established.

I have talked this matter over with the President, and I know that he is favorably interested in it, and that he gladly accepted the suggestion that he come over here this evening to meet this audience and express his own views in favor of this movement in which the American Civic Association is taking so prominent and leading a part. But you do not expect me to fill the stage this evening to the exclusion of those who have been regularly selected as speakers, and particularly not to take the place of, or infringe upon the time allowed to, Mr. McFarland, President of the American Civic Association. Recognizing, as I do, the practical and vigorous manner in which he has gone into this, as he has into most of the other problems in which the American Civic Association is interested, I feel that we have gained an ally—I should not put it that way—that we are allies with him, and that we are willing to help him and this Association in carrying on this work and see that we get from this coming Congress, if possible, a bill along the lines of that which Senator Smoot has advocated, which will permit of the establishment of a bureau of the sort I have described.

I take pleasure in presenting Mr. McFarland. [Applause.]



ADDRESS OF  
MR. J. HORACE McFARLAND

President American Civic Association

At Washington, December 13, 1911

“ARE NATIONAL PARKS WORTH WHILE?”

There can be only a negative reply to the query of the subject, unless it be conclusively shown that the National Parks add definitely something of value to the life or the resources of the Nation. Mere pride of possession cannot justify, in democratic America, the removal from development of upward of five millions of acres of the public domain.

THE AMERICAN PARK IDEA

To establish true value, real worth-whileness, therefore, it is necessary to put the National Parks on trial. Indeed, as the National Parks are but a larger development of municipal, county and state parks, we may quite properly put on the stand the whole American park idea.

It is necessary to call the recent rapid development of a certain kind of parks in the United States an American idea, for it has no close parallel abroad. Examining, for instance, the admirable plan upon which the capital of Belgium has been developing since 1572, we note in Brussels an almost entire absence of such parks as those of Boston. The present-day plan of Paris shows that inside the old city there had been provided almost as large an area of cemeteries in which to store the dead as of parks in which to restore the energies of the living. Great London has barely an acre of parks for each thousand of her people—only a tenth of the ideal American provision of an acre for every hundred inhabitants. Even model Berlin is long on municipal forests and short on well-distributed municipal parks. The recently published *Encyclopedia Britannica*, written abroad, devotes just 31 lines to the discussion of the word “park,” and 17 of these lines refer to its military significance!

So the American service park is a New World idea, and it is even quite new in the New World; for, at the date of the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia, parks in the United States were few in number, small in extent, and largely upon European models. Within five years, indeed, a contest has

raged in Greater New York around the idea of diverting a portion of Central Park from the service of the relatively few in the way of purely pleasure development to the service of the very many through the establishment of well-equipped playgrounds.

Yet inquiry has developed that, in 1909, 74 American cities owned 41,576 acres of parks, an average of about four-tenths of an acre to the 100 of their population, and spent upon them that year for maintenance—that is, to make them of service to the people—an average of \$91.42 per acre. Some of these cities are in what I call the honor class of American communities, in that they own and maintain an acre or more of parks for each hundred of their people. Such cities are Council Bluffs, Minneapolis, Harrisburg, Colorado Springs and Springfield, Ill.

### PLAYGROUNDS—THE FIRST AIDS TO CHILDHOOD

This American service park idea, into which we are inquiring critically as to its true value, its relative efficiency, has its intensive development in modern playgrounds—those first aids to endangered American childhood, of which few examples are found abroad, and not nearly enough in our own county. We have multiplied schools in which to cultivate the brain, but have delayed long in providing adequate facilities to develop and keep in order the body which houses the brain. Our cemeteries, our juvenile courts and our reform schools have increased much more rapidly than the means by which the city can hold back the population of the one and decrease the business of the others.

Chicago, for instance, has notably discovered the truth as to this relation between crime and disorder and the small park and social center. It is a departing relation; for in 1909 it was discovered that within a half-mile radius of her twelve splendidly equipped and maintained breathing-spots, veritable life-saving stations in the midst of the sea of industrial strain and stress, juvenile delinquency had decreased 44 per cent, while in the same year it had increased 11 per cent in the city as a whole.

Here, then, is the first evidence for the defendant at the bar—the American park idea. The service park, the ordered and supervised playground, act immediately and favorably on the health and the orderliness of the community, and

consequently increase materially the average of individual efficiency. In other words, they pay dividends in humanity.

### AMERICAN PARK SYSTEMS

The park idea we are examining has a development in another way. The joining of separated parks by a highway of green, usually called a parkway, is the step taken when a community develops from the simple having of parks to the proud possession of a park system. The one may merely have happened; the other is always the result of a careful plan. Minneapolis, Hartford, Kansas City, Boston, Buffalo and other prosperous and advanced American cities have such systems. Chicago has a great plan for a park system, and owns some links in the chain which is to bind it together.

An adequate park system, looking toward the future of the city, and giving to every inhabitant easy access without expense for transportation to the relief of a spot of green, to the recreation of a playground, is the most profitable investment a city can make. It is profitable in promoting the welfare of the people; it is profitable in providing along its borders increased taxable values. For instance, Kansas City's Paseo, cut through her length, has cleared fully its cost in increased values, and even old Central Park in New York has returned to the city more than eight times the total amount spent in purchase and development within sixty years.

I bring then before the court the second witness for the character and worth-whileness of the American park idea. Well-considered park improvements always react favorably upon community values. Proper park investments are usually placed at what amounts to compound increment.

### WHAT FOSTERS TRUE PATRIOTISM?

But there is another witness for the defendant. It is typified in the American flag, the emblem of our national existence, the concrete, visible essence of that love of country which manifests itself in the essential virtue of patriotism. Consider what it is that inspires us as we sing the national hymn. Is it our wonder of mining, showing in the hideous ore dumps, the sordid mining village? Is it in the burned-over waste that has followed the cutting of much of our forest wealth? Is it the powerhouse in which is harnessed the beauty of Niagara? Is it the smoking factory chimneys, the houses

of the grimy mill town, the malodorous wharves along our navigable rivers? Is it even the lofty metropolitan skyscraper, or the great transcontinental steel highway?

No; not one of these produces patriotism. Listen to the most sordid materialist who is American in birth or residence, as he boasts: it is always of the beauty of his town, his state, his country! Our devotion to the flag begins in that love of country which its beauty has begotten; it may end, at the last supreme test, in the beauty of soul that makes the patriot ready to die for his country in battle—if just battle there may ever again be.

Now these parks that have been presented to you, and those I am yet to present, are, all of them, planned to show forth the beauty of the land. Never a service park have I seen or heard of that failed to use to the utmost the trees and the plants, the grass and the flowers that stand for our native land. Playgrounds are sometimes, perforce, on limited city spaces, but always there is at least the attempt to get the blue of the sky opened to the boys and girls. Into the brick and concrete heart of the city the park brings a little of the primeval outdoors, and here grows best the love of country which sees with adoration the waving stars and stripes.

So I hold that, in safeguarding and stimulating the essential virtue of patriotism, the beauty of the American park stands forth as most of all worth while. I urge that, as an antidote to the teachings of social disorder, as a counter-irritant to the saloon, as a relentless foe to the slum, the American park idea in the playground is most completely justified.

### THE NATION'S LARGER PLAYGROUNDS

It is but a step across the country and the state park to the National Park. There come, increasingly in these work-filled American days, times when the tired spirit seeks a wider space for change and rest than any city, or indeed, any state, can provide. The deep forests of the Sierras call, the snow-capped peaks of the Rockies beckon. The roar of Niagara can drown the buzz of the ticker. Old Faithful's gleaming column of silver spray shuts off the balance-sheet. El Capitan makes puny the capitol of any state, or of the nation. The camp under the oaks of the Hetch-Hetchy Valley, near the ripple of the Tuolumne, restores vigor, up-

lifts the wearied spirit. What cathedral of man's building shows forth the power of God unto health of soul as does the Grand Canyon of the Colorado? The glacier wonderland of the Northwest gives us lessons on the building of the continent, and the giant sequoias of the Pacific Slope teach us of our own littleness.

These National Parks, then, are our larger playgrounds. Everything that the limited scope of the city park can do as quick aid to the citizen, they are ready to do more thoroughly, on a greater scale.

To the vast open spaces, the sight of great mountains, the opportunity to live a mile or more higher up, they add possibilities of real life in the open just touched upon as yet, even though more than three thousand horses this year drew their owners on camping trips into the Yellowstone alone.

The national playgrounds, too, can, if they are held inviolable, preserve for us, as no minor possessions can, our unique scenic wonders, our great natural mysteries. The spouting geyser basins and marvelous hot springs of the Yellowstone, the atmospheric splendors of the Grand Canyon of the Colorado, the silver threads of the Falls of the Yosemite, the ancient homes of the cliff-dwellers on the Mesa Verde, the ice marvels of the Montana glaciers, the blue marvel of Crater Lake, the towering temples amid the big trees of the Sierras—how long would they last unharmed and free to all the people if the hand of the Federal Government was withdrawn from them? Ask harassed, harnessed Niagara—depending right now for its scenic life upon the will of this Congress—after, indeed, Congress alone has saved it until now from state neglect!

## THE DIFFERING FUNCTIONS OF FORESTS AND PARKS

The nation now has, it should be said, vast and admirably handled national forests, potential with profit for all the people. But there must be no confusion between the differing functions of the forests and the parks.

The primary function of the national forests is to supply lumber. The primary function of the national parks is to maintain in healthful efficiency the lives of the people who must use that lumber. The forests are the nation's reserve wood-lots. The parks are the nation's reserve for the main-

tenance of individual patriotism and federal solidarity. The true ideal of their maintenance does not run parallel to the making of the most timber, or the most pasturage, or the most water-power.

Our National Parks are young. They are yet undeveloped to any considerable extent. But one of them, the Yellowstone, is comfortably accessible. Their value to the nation is potential, more than instant, simply because they are not, as a whole, yet known to our people. The nearest east of them is fifteen hundred miles west of the country's center of population in Indiana. Our people yet cross three thousand miles of salt water to see less impressive scenery, less striking wonders, less inspiring majesty in canyon, waterfall and geyser, than they have not seen at home, because the way to Europe has been made broad, comfortable and "fashionable!"

### THE NATIONAL PARKS BUT LITTLE USED

In 1910, barely two hundred thousand visitors to our thirteen National Parks and our twenty-eight national monuments were reported, but all the east-bound Atlantic greyhounds were crowded to their capacity. We have not yet begun to use the National Parks; we have not commenced to attract to them a share of the golden travel tide which is said to have taken from America to Europe \$350,000,000 in 1910.

Indeed, we are not ready for visitors in our National Parks. We have, as yet, no National Park System. The parks have just happened; they are not the result of such an overlooking of the national domain as would, and ought to, result in a coördinated system. There is no adequately organized control of the National Parks. With 41 National Parks and monuments, aggregating an area larger than two sovereign states, and containing priceless glories of scenery and wonders of nature, we do not have as efficient a provision for administration as is possessed by many a city of but fifty thousand inhabitants for its hundred or so acres! In a lamentable number of cases, the administration consists solely in the posting of a few warning notices!

### LACK OF PARK MANAGEMENT

Nowhere in official Washington can an inquirer find an office of the National Parks, or a desk devoted solely to their

management. By passing around through three departments, and consulting clerks who have taken on the extra work of doing what they can for the nation's playgrounds, it is possible to come at a little information.

This is no one's fault. Uncle Sam has simply not waked up about his precious parks. He has not thrown over them the mantle of any complete legal protection—only the Yellowstone has any adequate legal status, and the Yosemite is technically a forest reserve. Selfish and greedy assaults have been made upon the parks, and it is under a legal "joker" that San Francisco is now seeking to take to herself without having in ten years shown any adequate engineering reason for the assault, nearly half of the Yosemite. Three years ago several of us combined to scotch and kill four vicious legislative snakes under which any one might have condemned at \$2.50 per acre the Great Falls of the Yellowstone, or even entered upon a national cemetery for the production of electric power at the same price for the land!

Now there is light and a determination to do as well for the nation as any little city does for itself. The Great Father of the nation, who honors us tonight by his presence, has been the unswerving friend of the nation's scenic possessions. He has consistently stood for the people's interest in Niagara; he now stands for their interest in the nation's parks.

His Secretary of the Interior, the presiding officer of the evening, has applied his great constructive ability to the national park problem. It was at his invitation that the first National Park Conference was held in September last. He has visited most of the parks, and, coming from a city where intensive park development has proceeded to be a greater beneficence than in any other in the world, he comprehends fully the American service park idea.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL PARKS

There is, then, hope for the parks. The Congress will not refuse, I am sure, to enact legislation creating a Bureau of National Parks, to the custody of which all the nation's pearls of great price shall be entrusted. Under such a bureau, aided by a commission of national prominence and scope, I predict that there will be undertaken not only such ordering of the parks as will vastly increase their use and their usefulness, but such a survey of the land as will result in the establishment of many new National Parks, before it is too late.

Niagara, never more in danger than at this moment, must eventually, if it is to be a cataract and not a catastrophe, come under the federal mantle as a national reservation, as President Taft has again recently urged. In no other way can America be saved from the lasting disgrace that now threatens our most notable natural wonder. A nation that can afford a Panama Canal cannot afford a dry Niagara!

There is something inspiring in the thought of a National Park sacred to the memory of the great liberator, and adding to the beauty and dignity of the city in which he poured out his last full measure of devotion. A Lincoln Memorial National Park, joining the lovely forests between Washington and Baltimore and Annapolis to the Potomac, would be a thousand times more fitting tribute to the glory of our first martyr than a mere commercial highway.

He whose genius made the nation, and whose wisdom planned this Federal City to be a fitting capital for a hundred millions of free people when yet there were but a scant three millions clinging to the Atlantic seaboard, ought also to be thus memorialized. Why shall not Mount Vernon and its environs come into a great Washington Memorial National Park which shall link together anew, as it reaches the Potomac, the fame of our two greatest presidents, and forever blot out a line once fought over in civil warfare?

Nothing is more certain than that eventually the nation will come to own memorial areas, which shall serve a double purpose in their tributes to the departed great and their beneficence to the living. Delay means but enhanced and compounded cost. With such a truly patriotic provision for the future as well as the present as would be involved in the creation of a great National Park System, available to the people of the East as well as to those of the West, our federal scenic possessions would come to attract the travel of the world. Inadequate though they are now, inaccessible as they are now, unadministered as they are now, our National Parks have added very definitely to the resources of our people, and are well worth while. When they shall have been given the attention that is in the minds of our President and our Secretary of the Interior, they will increase in efficiency, in beauty, in extent, and in benefits open to all the people, so that they will even more be entirely worth while.



# For a Bureau of National Parks

SPECIAL MESSAGE OF PRESIDENT TAFT TO  
CONGRESS, FEBRUARY 2, 1912

"I earnestly recommend the establishment of a Bureau of National Parks. Such legislation is essential to the proper management of those wondrous manifestations of nature, so startling and so beautiful that everyone recognizes the obligations of the Government to preserve them for the edification and recreation of the people.

"The Yellowstone Park, the Yosemite, the Grand Canyon of the Colorado, the Glacier National Park and the Mount Rainier National Park and others furnish appropriate instances. In only one case have we made anything like adequate preparation for the use of a park by the public. That case is the Yellowstone National Park. Every consideration of patriotism and the love of nature and of beauty and of art requires us to expend money enough to bring all these natural wonders within easy reach of our people. The first step in that direction is the establishment of a responsible bureau, which shall take upon itself the burden of supervising the parks and of making recommendations as to the best method of improving their accessibility and usefulness."

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administration of these parks. Each park had a superintendent and such employees under him as the generosity of Congress at the particular time happened to give. That generosity, very naturally and inevitably, as things are done in this government, and in most others, varied with the political influence and the energy of the advocates of the particular park. If it so happened that the people immediately connected with, or concerned in a particular park, were active and influential, they secured larger appropriations than others; but no attempt to make these things uniform or to conform to any standard of administration had ever been made, so far as I am able to discover. It was on that account that we held last year at the Yellowstone National Park the first National Conference on this subject ever held in this country. At that Conference we had not only the superintendents and administrative officials of all the National Parks, but also representatives of the concessionaires. The principal railroads concerned in affording transportation facilities were also represented, and we took up and discussed in a very broad way the problems that confront National Park administration,—the questions of making them better known and more accessible to the public, and the important questions of the treatment of the public after it has arrived at the parks. There was then but one agency by which any attempt to administer the parks in a collective manner was provided, and that agency was the Chief Clerk of the Department of the Interior, who has acted pretty much as the Department of the Interior itself has acted, as a "catch-all" for the things that can find no convenient lodgment elsewhere. The only way in which the problems in one park, or the solutions of those problems, bore any relation to those in another, was through the 'happenstance' that all had to go through the channel of the Chief Clerk's office. If we had worked out a problem in connection with one park, it was always a mere chance if the results benefited any other. You can see how unsound and uneconomic such a system was. I have used the past tense in telling of these conditions, but I may say that the conditions of last year are also the conditions of this year, that there has been no improvement except as we have brought it about at arm's length and by main force under the same provisions of law and of appropriation acts that we had before.

We did draw up and present to Congress a Bill for the

Sp. 14 Aug 1913.

# NATIONAL PARKS—THE NEED OF THE FUTURE

At the Eighth Annual Convention of the American Civic Association, held at Baltimore, November 20, 1912, the principal address was delivered by Rt. Hon. James Bryce, British Ambassador, on the subject "National Parks—the Need of the Future." Introducing the president of the American Civic Association, Mr. J. Horace McFarland, and later Mr. Bryce, Hon. Walter L. Fisher, Secretary of the Interior, presiding, said:

## OPENING ADDRESS OF HON. WALTER L. FISHER

Secretary of the Interior

At Baltimore, November 20, 1912

*Ladies and Gentlemen:*

A year ago I had the honor of presiding at the meeting of this Association, at which the President of the United States spoke on the subject of a National Parks Bureau. I believe we are looking forward this evening to an honor only technically second to that, a meeting at which the representative of Great Britain in this country is to address you on the same general subject.

At that meeting last year it was made very clear, I thought, that our National Park administration was in urgent need of some reorganization and some effective coördination. It will do no harm to repeat briefly the situation of the National Parks of this country. A year ago they were, as they had been from the beginning, simply the creatures of separate statutes, each one prescribing the rules under which a particular park should be organized, established and governed, and each differing in important particulars from the others. Except in so far as the first statute, passed by the Federal Congress, had served as a model for some of the later acts, there was no uniformity in the legislation, and no machinery of any kind had been established for the government or







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